

PROLOGUE



In all organizations, whether they be schools or colleges, or any other; it is quite clear that a certain high level of communication performance would be required on part of the Administrators for effective work output. But often this may be difficult to achieve and sustain owing to different reasons – which could simply be coined as ‘problems’. Problems manifest themselves at different levels, in different ways; and create dysfunction and inefficiency in running of the organization. It is possible to overcome these problems by acquiring and enhancing the required communication knowledge and skills for becoming efficient educational administrators – for the betterment of the field of education; and in the larger interest and well-being of the society as well. The solution may lie with the educational administrators themselves. Now, more than ever before, they need to be equipped to respond to the evolving competitive times which present newer challenges and renewed demands to their job at hand.

As heads of educational institutes, College Principals – indeed – play a pivotal role in administration. They have major responsibilities in terms of planning, coordinating, maintaining human relations, evaluating performance and giving feedback, resource mobilization, and above all – handling financial matters. A principal contributes a lot to the overall organizational climate of the institute – since all manifest performance is hinged on the communication that happens within and outside the institute, and the role that the principal plays within the framework of the managerial needs and requirements.

The researcher proposed to develop this ‘Communication Module’ to help strengthen / fill in the loose or missing links in the communication abilities of the college principals – which in turn would lead to healthy and more effective communication networking – enabling them to perform efficiently and optimally at their job. The decision to develop this self-contained, self-explanatory module was

taken keeping in mind the fact that college principals usually keep busy with work round the year, and it would be pertinent to offer them material in print which could facilitate self-learning at their own pace.

Moreover, research in Education has established the usefulness of comprehensive modules in enhancing 'learning' in particular target groups. 'Need based' modules are known to encourage creative learning, bring in desirable changes in knowledge, attitude and skills (which ultimately help in solving problems); and also helps create and sustain interest among learners.

Before developing the module, the researcher conducted a Role Analysis Study as well as a Need Assessment Survey of methodologically sampled fifty college principals currently on the post, as well as five retired principals, and five other administrators in the educational system. The Role Analysis Study clearly pointed to the fact that the role of a college principal is that of an important functionary, a significant link between the students (the main beneficiaries of the educational institutes) and the management / university authorities who are the providers of the facilities for education. Thus as incumbents of this high administrative position, college principals are equipped to put a number of rights and duties into effect, along with fulfilling certain legitimate expectations that society too would have of them. The Role Analysis helped the researcher perceive the nuances of the principals job in the context of the educational system of our country.

Further, conducting the Needs Assessment Survey on the college principals helped the researcher gauge their present level of information about 'communication' and also helped note their current use of communication modes or channels in their overall style of functioning at work. This helped the researcher to establish priorities in the content to be included in the module which would cater to the precise needs in 'communication' of the college principals

Overall, the role analysis study and the needs assessment survey affirmed that the self-instructional module which was to be developed would definitely be of interest and use to college principals to enhance their communication skills.

The researcher has tried to relate the information, illustrations and questions presented in this activity based module – to the challenges faced by college principals in their communication with adolescent students, colleagues, support staff, members of the management board, university officials, government officials, parents of students, visitors, and perhaps many others,

Thus, the objectives of preparing this module were :

- i.) to help college principals gain clarity and perspective in understanding the concept of communication in all its parameters, and
- ii.) to help college principals gain clarity and perspective in understanding organizational communication and its dynamics and obtain useful inputs to help them better their communication performance.

To facilitate reading, understanding and recall the module is divided in two sections: Section 1 deals with the concept of communication presented in different segments, while Section 2 deals with Organizational Communication and its Dynamics. This section is divided into four units, viz.

- A.) Understanding Organizational Communication
- B.) Oral Communication
- C.) Written Communication
- D.) Use of technology in Communication.

Different segments and progress-check questions have been presented under each unit. An introduction at the beginning and a contextual interpretation at the end have been written for each of the sections / units. Self-assessment exercises are also included as necessary. There is no pre-requisite for any college principal (or any other educational administrators / managers / academicians) to study this module.

It is indeed – never too early nor too late for anyone to think in terms of enhancing ones' skills.